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Recreational Water Illness and Injury Prevention Week: Think Healthy. Swim Healthy. Be Healthy!

The Department of Public Health and Social Services, Division of Environmental Health (DEH), would like you to enjoy this summer. If you are a swimmer, you should ensure that the water in the pool you use is safe for you, your family, and your friends. The week before Memorial Day (May 20–26, 2013) is Recreational Water Illness and Injury (RWII) Prevention Week. Every year, thousands of Americans get sick with recreational water illnesses (RWIs), which are caused by germs found in places where we swim. The goal of RWII Prevention Week is to raise awareness about healthy and safe swimming.

We all share the water we swim in, and we each need to do our part to keep ourselves, our families, and our friends healthy. To help protect yourself and other swimmers from germs, here are a few simple and effective steps all swimmers can take each time we swim:

Keep the poop and pee out of the water:

- Do not swim when you have diarrhea.
- Shower with soap before you start swimming.
- Take a bathroom break every 60 minutes.
- Wash your hands after using the toilet or changing diapers.
- Take a rinse shower before you get back into the water.
- Do not swallow the water you swim in.
- Take children on bathroom breaks every 60 minutes or check diapers every 30–60 minutes.
- Change diapers in the bathroom or diaper-changing area and not at poolside where germs can rinse into the water.

Check the chlorine and pH levels before getting into the water:

- Proper chlorine (1-3 mg/L or parts per million [ppm]) and pH (7.2-7.8) levels maximize germ-killing power.

To assist swimmers with checking the pH and chlorine levels in the pools they use, DEH, through the generosity of the American Chemical Council, is offering free pool test kits. These kits include a brochure with instructions and information on pool water chemistry, along with three test strips. The test kits will be available to the first 300 people to visit the DEH offices on

the second floor of the Central Public Health Facility in Mangilao. Remember...Think Healthy.
Swim Healthy. Be Healthy!

For more information about healthy swimming, visit www.cdc.gov/healthyswimming/ or call
DEH at 735-7221.



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